805 is made to keep track of the date. Alongside the use of this calendrical system, attention is still paid to dividing the year by moons. Instead of following the aboriginal system of referring to each new moon by a descriptive word or phrase (as, for example, "Moose moon" to designate the month when moose are fat), an effort is now made to correlate the moon with the western calendar system. This leads to some confusion. Thus the new moon around August 12, 1945 was referred to as "August moon" by one man but as "September moon" by another. However, opinion generally identifies the moon with the name of the following month. The Indians have kept track of the years only since about 1914. "Before we don't know years," Old Man explained. It may be added that since then, the Indian's memory for years is also not too reliable. As a result of the earlier ignorance of years, few older informants are certain of their ages. Some attempt has been made by the Indian Agents to determine ages by reference to the person's development at the time of the Klondike gold rush in 1898 or the outbreak of the European war in 1914.

The seasons are not precisely correlated with the calendar months in the thinking of the people and such "natural" divisions of the year hold considerable popular interest. The first dry snow, occurring in late October, is the beginning of winter. Spring comes when the crust of the snow begins to melt and the ice goes out in the rivers. Summer is the subsequent, relatively brief period of hot days, while fall follows when the deciduous trees begin to lose their color. Fall is also the time when game is fat and the bull moose begins, or is expected to begin, to run. All these phenomena are looked for and their appearance is associated with important changes in cultural activities.

LORE AND LEARNING

[181] Kaska culture is characterized by little speculative or abstract thought. Aboriginal myths
773 represent the limit of cosmological speculation and, in some cases, have become fused with
177 western religious ideas. This may be illustrated by the creation myth obtained from Nitla.

> 539 The world was made by Jesus. At first there was a flood of salt water and only the sky was above the deep. Jesus then told the rat to plunge into the water and bring up some ground. The rat tried but "couldn't make it." The water was too deep and he died. Then Jesus sent a small duck (a species with a distinctive head and a cry like "rrrrrr")[1] down under the water to get ground. "He catch the ground. He come up, let him go. Ground soon grow and make big and bigger." The earth grew from the size of a little island. Jesus then sent a wolf down to see how big the ground was getting. The wolf began to run around the island but never came back. "Too big that ground. The wolf become game." Everything in the world originated from Jesus.
>
> "Jesus, he make Injun. No Injun first time. Jesus think about it. Make ground, willows, anything grow. No hill, nothing. Just like dirt the ground. He make lots of birds; leave 'em anyplace. Birds sit down and sing. This ground alive. Birds live and grow." Then Jesus made the whitefish, trout, grayling, and other fish. They were intended as food on which the Indian could maintain himself. Jesus also created the moose and caribou. "These Injun grub. If man lucky he get this grub; if hard luck maybe be lost his game."
>
> Then Jesus created the Indian. The first man was made out of mud and ashes, Jesus tracing the human figure in the soil—"head, legs, arm, hair, eye, anything." Jesus left the image and it was like a man asleep. When Jesus spoke to the figure, however, it couldn't answer. It couldn't

[1] This would seem to be one of the crested species of duck.

> breathe. "He think about it." Then Jesus brought a small bird and threw it into the clay mouth 773
> of the image. Again Jesus spoke to the man and this time the figure replied with speech. "He 539
> talk damn good." 177
>
> Jesus thought about what He had done. He decided that He ought to make a girl for this man. Giving the man some "lunch," Jesus told him to go to sleep. Then cutting into the man Jesus removed a left rib—the last rib. He put this under the blanket next to the man. When the man awoke a woman was sleeping alongside of him. Jesus told the man to "keep" the girl. He told the couple to raise children. When the man and woman died, Jesus said, the children would marry and they would have children and so there would always be people in the world.

Aboriginal elements are more sharply delineated in the myth of the origin of the sun and moon,[2] which was obtained from the same informant.

> At first there was no light, just perpetual darkness. The sun and moon had a boss and were 773
> kept in a cabin where they furnished never failing light. The keeper of these bodies had a wife, 539
> who had a daughter. This girl drank water in which there was some dirt. She was unsuccessful in purifying the water and as a result of swallowing the dirt conceived and gave birth to a boy. The boy "grow smart quick." When he was able to walk around he began to cry and demanded the moon to play with. His grandfather assented and gave the moon to the child. The boy rolled the moon back and forth in the cabin until it accidentally rolled out the door and away. From then on moonlight appeared.
>
> The next day the little boy began to cry for the sun. The grandfather heard him and exclaimed: "I'm tired of hearing that crying. Give it to him." So the mother gave the child the sun as a plaything. The boy rolled the sun back and forth until it too rolled away. Now the family found itself in darkness. They went to sleep. In the morning upon awakening they found daylight everywhere. "Good now. No more hard time."

Although lacking a comprehensive sample of Kaska speculation, we may nevertheless 181
provisionally seek to classify their reflective thought. Ontologically the people are, of course, 812
supernaturalistic in their conceptual perspective. That is, they tend to refer ultimate explanations of being to a principle which is beyond nature. Today this being is generally identified as an anthropomorphic God. It is not surprising to find this ontological theory associated with the metaphysical duality of mind and matter. Such dualism is evident in the notion that a person's thoughts can influence the capture of game and fur because of a power which is continuous with man's mind and also controls the animal world. Dualism also manifests itself in the idea of divination, in the ethical conceptions of free will and predestination, and in the belief that human life depends on the correlated functioning of body and soul. Explicitly, of course, the notion of metaphysical duality has never been formalized in Kaska philosophy.

One characteristic of epistemological thinking stands out clearly, the relative nature of 812
truth. The Indian does not regard his thinking in absolutist, or universal, terms of validity. 829
"That's what Injun believe," Old Man would say, implying the realization that white and other people have conceptual systems which differ from that held by the Kaska. Knowledge to the Indian is derived from experience and tradition. Since not all peoples have the

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[2] The same tale occurs among the Kutchin and also the Tlingit. See Chapman, *Notes on the Tinneh Tribe of Anvik, Alaska* (1907), 8-10; Pinart, *Notes sur les Koloches* (1872), 797-798. [170]

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101 Both tribes live
[224] chiefly by hunting and trapping, but the Kaska depend more on the
chase than do the Tahltan. Large game-animals are abundant, consisting
136 of moose, caribou, sheep, goat, and bear. Marmots are plentiful
in certain parts, and buffalo are said to have been fairly numerous at one time in the more eastern sections of the country.

101 The Kaska are entirely surrounded by Athapascan tribes, while the Tahltan are neighbors of tribes of two other stocks; viz., the Tlingit to the northwest and west, and the Niska and Kitksan tribes of the Tsimshian stock to the southwest. To the south the Sikani, Carrier, and Chilcotin tribes of the Athapascan stock separate the Tahltan and Kaska from the Shuswap and Lillooet, the nearest tribes of the
439 interior Salish. Owing largely to their position, the Tahltan had a
great deal of intercourse with the Tlingit, much more than with any
487 other people. Intercourse and trading were chiefly by way of Stikine
River. Trade was in the hands of the Tlingit of Wrangell and vicinity, who annually transported goods by canoe up the river to the head of canoe navigation, a little above Telegraph Creek and close to the headquarters of the Tahltan. The people of the latter tribe acted as middlemen in passing coast products inland, and inland products coastward. The main trade-route between the far east (the Mackenzie valley and the plains) and the Pacific coast in this part of British Columbia lay through the Tahltan and Kaska territory, and there is evidence of a number of cultural features having penetrated a long distance in both directions along that route. Here, as in other parts of the west, the main trade-routes lay as nearly east and west as the physical features of the country allowed; while other routes running north and south within the interior were unimportant, notwithstanding the fact that the nature of the country generally was favorable for travel and intercourse.

487 It may be expected that dissemination of tales has occurred chiefly
177 along the main trade-routes, where intercourse between the tribes was
x171 most frequent and closest. Hence throughout the interior, dissemination
173 of tales has followed east and west lines rather than north and
south. As the same conditions as to routes prevailed in the southern interior as in the northern, it seems probable that a number of the incidents in tales of the Tahltan and Kaska which correspond with those in tales of the interior Salish have not passed directly from Athapascan to Salish tribes, or *vice versâ*, but have reached both from
177 the same eastern and western sources,—chiefly, it seems, the latter.
x171 The Tahltan assert that in the old trading-rendezvous on the upper
173 Stikine, members of the two tribes associated there for weeks together,
and that one of the features of meeting was story-telling. Tahltan *raconteurs* told their stories one day, and Tlingit told theirs the following day. Sometimes they thus told stories turn about for

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weeks. Occasionally the tribes competed in story-telling to see which had the most stories. As a result, it came to be acknowledged that the Tlingit had considerably more stories than the Tahltan. In this way, it is said, the Tahltan learned Tlingit stories, and *vice versâ*. 177 171~ 773

It is therefore not surprising to find many elements of Tlingit origin in Tahltan tales. It seems that most stories of the Raven cycle, and many other tales, have been borrowed almost in their entirety. On the other hand, the Kaska tales show much less indication of Tlingit influence, and probably a little more of influence from the east. On the whole, they are probably more purely Athapascan. The importance of the chase (especially hunting of caribou) is reflected in the tales of both tribes. Fishing is not prominent, excepting in tales borrowed from the Tlingit. Root-digging and berrying, features often referred to in Salish tales, are almost entirely absent. Tales of European origin appear to be altogether unknown. I inquired for such tales as those of Petit Jean, John the Bear, and others, but without result. About one hundred and fifty themes, episodes, and incidents occurring in tales of the interior Salish (chiefly Shuswap), regarding which I made inquiry, I failed to obtain among the Tahltan, and there are also many others that are absent.

All the Tahltan tales, with the exception of six, were collected during the course of my work among the tribe in 1912. Almost all of them were obtained from Tuu'ts ("strong rocks"), also known as "Dandy Jim," of the Nahlin clan of the Raven phratry of the Tahltan. He was selected by the tribe as the best-qualified person to give me information on their general ethnology, mythology, and so on. The other six tales were obtained at Telegraph Creek in 1915 from Jim and others. The Kaska tales were collected at the foot of Dease Lake in 1915, my informants being Tsonake'l, also known as Albert Dease, and his wife Nettie Mejade'sse, both members of the Kaska tribe. In every case I collected all the tales my informants knew.

Historic traditions, such as tales of war-expeditions and migrations, are not included in the present collection. I have included a number of variants of incidents in the text. I have added some explanatory notes where these seemed to be required. The comparative notes, excepting those referring to the interior Salish, Chilcotin, and some of the Tsetsa'ut notes, were added by the Editor of the Journal.

1. STORY OF BEAVER.

A long time ago, when all the animals were people, Beaver was a great transformer. He travelled along a wide trail that was much used. Along the trail were many monsters that preyed on people. He came to a place where people always disappeared. Wolverene killed them. His house was at the foot of a glacier, between two 539

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very early in the morning, threw the cannibal's trousers into the fire, and put on his own. When the cannibal discovered that he had no trousers, he said it would be very bad for him if the sun got up and he were without trousers. Beaver had two pairs, and the cannibal begged Beaver to give him one pair. When the sun was about to get up, Beaver took pity on him and gave him a pair, which he at once put on. The cannibal then acknowledged that Beaver was more powerful than he, and left him, ascending towards the sky.[1] Beaver watched where he went, and, following, came to where his wives were. He took them back, and travelled to where people were. After he had met them, they all travelled together. As they journeyed, two Ravens began to fly ahead of them. The Ravens drove all the game away, so that the people could not get any. It was winter, and they began to starve. When people died, the Ravens picked out their eyes. At last all the people had died excepting Beaver and his wives. The Ravens flew over them, saying, "Yes, you are alive yet, but it will not be for long. You will soon be dead too, and then we shall eat your eyes." The Ravens always flew ahead of them wherever they travelled, and at night roosted on a tree near by. It was moonlight, and Beaver burrowed under the snow until he was past the tree where the Ravens were sleeping. Then he ran ahead, and found the country full of caribou and other game that the Ravens had been driving ahead. He killed many caribou, and returned the way he had come.

Beaver now pretended to be dead to deceive the Ravens. He told his wives to put his hands up near his eyes and cover him with brush. The Ravens awoke at daybreak, and, looking down, saw that Beaver seemed to be dead. Beaver's wives left, crying. The Ravens flew over their heads, saying, "Yes, by and by you will be dead also, and we shall pick out your eyes." They flew back and alighted on the brush. Here they disputed as to which eye each would take. Beaver suddenly seized their legs, and they begged to be let off. Beaver, however, had no mercy on them, and burned them alive in the camp-fire, saying, "What about the people you have killed? Why should I spare you?" Beaver now went out to where he had killed the caribou. When he was about to return home, he smeared blood over his snow-shoes, so his wives would know that he had killed game.[2]

2. ORIGIN OF THE EARTH.

Once there was no earth. Water was where the earth is now. The world was as a great lake. The animals and birds wanted to have an earth, and proposed to dive for it. The earth was very deep under the

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[1] Some people say "to the sky," for this cannibal was the Sun and lived there.

[2] The narrator said that there was more of this story, but he did not remember it. See RBAE 31 : 703 (Arapaho, Beaver, Blackfoot, Chippewayan, Comanche, Gros Ventre, Jicarilla Apache, Kutenai, Nez Percé, Pawnee, Thompson; see also Caddo).

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●773 water. Beaver and Muskrat, and all the animals and birds, dived, but none of them reached the bottom. None of them staid under water longer than half a day. At last Diver (a bird) went down. After six days he came up quite exhausted and speechless. His friends examined his toe-nails, and found mud or earth under them. From this they formed on top of the water a new earth, which grew until it formed the present earth. At first it was merely mud and very soft. Later it became firm, and trees and vegetation began to grow on it. Now the earth is old and dry. Perhaps it is drying up.[1]

3. THE GREAT FLOOD.

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773 Once there came a great flood which covered the earth. Most of the people made rafts, and some escaped in canoes. Great darkness came on, and high winds which drove the vessels hither and thither. The people became separated. Some were driven far away. When the flood subsided, people landed wherever they found the nearest land. When the earth became dry, they lived in the places near where they had landed. People were now widely scattered over the world. They did not know where other people lived, and probably thought themselves the only survivors. Long afterwards, when in their wanderings they met people from another place, they spoke different languages, and could not understand one another. *This is why*

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x171 [1] The narrator stated that this was originally a long story. He had forgotten the cause ascribed for the Flood, its duration, and many details that he had heard. Compare Algonquin (Charlevoix; see Barbeau, GSCan 80 : 299), Arapaho (Dorsey and Kroeber, FM 5 : 1, 3, 4, 6, [illegible]), Assiniboine (Lowie, PaAM 4 : 101; Potts, JAFL 5 : 73), Beaver (Goddard, PaAM 10 : 258), Blackfoot (Wissler, PaAM 2 : 19; John Maclean, Canadian Savage Folk, p. 51), Carrier (Morice, TCI 5 : 10), Cherokee (Mooney, RBAE 19 : 239), Chipewyan (Petitot 378; Lowie, PaAM 10 : 195), Cree (Russell 206; Skinner, PaAM 9 : 83; JAFL 29 : 348; John Maclean, Canadian Savage Folk, p. 73; Petitot 470; Swindlehurst, JAFL 18 : 139; Simms, JAFL 19 : 340), Delaware (Chamberlain, JAFL 4 : 210; Brinton, The Lenape and their Legends, p. 134), (?) Dog-Rib (Petitot 317; Sir John Franklin, Narrative of a Second Journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea [London, 1828], p. 292), Fox (Jones, JAFL 14 : 234; 24 : 209; PAES 1 : 369), Gros Ventre (PaAM 1 : 60), Hare (Petitot 145), Hidatsa (Maximilian Prinz zu Wied, Reise in das Innere Nord-America 2 : 225), Huron and Wyandot (Barbeau, AA 16 : 290; GSCan 80 : 30, 38, 50, [Holland] 299; Hale, JAFL 1 : 180; W. E. Connelley, Wyandot Folk-Lore [Topeka, 1899], p. 67), Iowa (cited by Boas, JAFL 4 : 19; Dorsey, JAFL 5 : 300), Kathlamet (Boas, RBAE 26 : 23), Luiseño ([illegible], JAFL 26 : [illegible]), Maidu (Dixon, BAM 17 : 39), Menominee (Hoffman, RBAE 14 [pt. 1] : 114; AA [old series] 1890 : 243-258; Skinner, PaAM 13 : 239), Miwok (Kroeber, UCal 4 : 188, 202), Mohawk (Hewitt, RBAE 21 : 286), Newettee (Boas, Sagen 179, CU 2 : 229), Ojibwa (Schoolcraft, Hiawatha 39; Skinner, PaAM 9 : 173; De Jong, RAcadA 5 : 14; Carson, JAFL 30 : 486; Jones, PAES 7 [pt. 1] : 150, 271, 405; A. J. Blackbird, History of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians of Michigan [Ypsilanti, 1887], p. 76; Radin, GSCan 48 : 20; J. G. Kohl, Kitchi-Gami [Bremen, 1859], 1 : 326, 2 : 224); Chamberlain [Mississaga], JAFL 5 : 291; for other Ojibwa references see Chamberlain, JAFL 4 : 195; Speck [Timagami], GSCan 71 : 38), Onondaga (Hewitt, RBAE 21 : 180), Sarcee (Simms, JAFL 17 : 180; E. F. Wilson, BAAS 58 [1888] : 244), Salinan (Mason UCal 14 : 80, 105), Seneca (Curtin, Bulletin

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there are now many different centres of population, many tribes, and many languages. Before the flood, there was but one centre; for all the people lived together in one country, and spoke one language.[1] 539 829 773

4. ORIGIN OF FIRE, AND ORIGIN OF DEATH.

Long ago the people had no fire. Of all the people, only Bear had fire. He had a fire-stone, with which he could make fire at any time. He jealously guarded this stone, and always kept it tied to his belt. One day he was lying down by the fire in his lodge when a little bird came in and approached the fire. Bear said, "What do you want?" and the bird answered, "I am nearly frozen, and have come in to warm myself." Bear told it to come and pick his lice. The little bird assented, and began to hop all over Bear, picking his lice. While doing this, it also picked the string which fastened the fire-stone to Bear's belt. When the string was completely picked asunder, the bird suddenly snatched the stone and flew off with it.[2] Now the animals had already arranged for the stealing of the fire, and waited in line, one behind another.[3] Bear chased the bird, and caught up with it just as it reached the first animal of the line. As it threw the fire to him, he ran with it; and, as Bear in turn overtook him, he passed it on to the next; and so on. At last the fire was passed to Fox, who ran up a high mountain with it. Bear was so exhausted that he could not follow Fox, and turned back. Fox broke up the fire-stone on the top of the mountain, and threw the fragments a piece to each tribe. Thus the many tribes all over the earth obtained fire; *and this is why there is fire in the rocks and woods everywhere now.* 539 822 773

Fox then descended to a creek and threw a stick down into the water, saying, "When people die, they shall come back to life again, even as this stick rises again to the surface of the water; also old people, when they die, shall come back young again." Just then Bear came there, and, feeling angry because the people had stolen his fire, he threw a 539 773

N.Y. State Museum 125 : 32). Shoshoni (Lowie, PaAM 2 : 19, 247). Yokuts (Kroeber, UCal 4 : 209, 229, 228, 229; Powers, CNAE 3 : 383; Potts, JAFL 5 : 73). Yuchi (Gatschet, AA [1893] 279, 280; Speck, UPenn 1 : 103). The author did not find this incident among the Tahltan, although he inquired for it. See also P. J. de Smet, Letters and Sketches (Philadelphia, 1843), p. 40, probably Cree; N. Perrot, Memoir on the Manners, Customs, and Religion of the Savages of North America (in E. H. Blair, The Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi Valley, 1 : 33), probably Ottawa. 171x

Mr. Robert T. Aitken has kindly given me the following additional references: Iroquois (David Cusick, Ancient History of the Six Nations, p. 1), Montagnais (?) (LeJeune, Jesuit Relations 5 : 155, compare Relation 6 : 157).

[2] Compare Bellacoola (Boas, Sagen 243), Carrier (Morice, TCI 5 : 10), Comox (Boas, Sagen 92), Lillooet (Teit, JAFL 25 : 300), Makah (?) (Swan, Indians of Cape Flattery, 57), Squamish (Boas, Sagen 57), Thompson (Teit, MAFLS 6 : 20, 22; JE 8 : 335), Tsetsaut (Boas, JAFL 9 : 260), Tsimshian (Boas, Sagen 228; RBAE 31 : 644), Twana (Eells, Am. Antiquarian 1 : 70 [Chehalis, Lummi, Puyallup]).

[3] See Tsetsaut (Boas, JAFL 9 : 260); RBAE 31 : 192, 901; Teit (MAFLS 11 : 2).

[4] See RBAE 31 : 900 (note 3).

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539 ●773 big rock into the water on top of the stick, so that the stick never came up again. Bear then said, "Henceforth, when people die, they shall be dead always, and shall never come back again." If Fox's stick had come up again after being hit by the rock, Fox would have won, and people would have had their lives renewed each time they died. There thus would have been no real death.[1] [825] Bear now, having no fire, said, "I will make a hole in the earth, so I shall be able to keep warm in the winter-time. I shall make my hole right on the trail." Fox said, "If you make your house right on the trail, people will always find you. Make it on the mountains." *This is why bears now make dens in the mountains.*

5. RAVEN, OR BIG-CROW.[2]

x171 539 The Kaska have a story of Raven, who acts as a transformer and trickster. The story is not well known to most of them, and may have been borrowed, at least in part, from the Tahltan. My informant would not attempt the telling of this story, as he said he did not know it well enough, and none of the other Kaska who happened to be at hand knew it any better. Among the incidents in this story are those of Raven defecating and asking his excrements for information,[3] and of Raven sending his penis across a river, where it enters a girl. Muskrat called out, "Cut it with grass!" Adsit[4] thinks this incident may have been borrowed from the Cree, who have a story of the culture-hero getting Muskrat to swim across a river with his penis, which then enters a girl. The latter gets sick, and Muskrat calls out to cut it with grass.[5]

6. BIG-MAN (DÉNE TCŌ).[6]

539 Big-Man was in the world very long ago. He was of huge stature, and had no hair on his head. When he stood erect, his head touched the sky. Once a long time ago the sky was very close to the earth,

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[1] See RBAE 30 : 303 (Arapaho, Assiniboin, Blackfoot, Caddo, Cheyenne, Coeur d'Alêne, Comanche, Cree, Diegueño, Dog-Rib, Eskimo, Hare, Klamath, Kutenai, Lillooet, Maidu, Miwok, Pawnee, Pomo, Quinault, Sanpoil, Shasta, Shoshoni, Shuswap, Takelma, Thompson, Ute, Wintun, Wishosk, Yana; see also Luiseño). Also known to the Tahltan. Compare p. 468 of the present number of this Journal.

[2] There exist analogous Tahltan stories of Raven. — J. T.

[3] See RBAE 30 : 694, note 3 (Chilcotin, Chinook, Flathead, Kathlamet, Lillooet, Nez Percé, Okanagon, Shoshoni, Shuswap, Takelma, Thompson).

[4] George Adsit of Telegraph Creek, B.C., has lived for many years among the Cree, Kaska, and Tahltan.

[5] See MAFLS 11 : 71, 185; and RBAE 31 : 722 (Arapaho, Alsea, Assiniboin, Blackfoot, Gros Ventre, Kalapuya, Menominee, Molala, Nez Percé, Shasta, Shuswap, Thompson, Tillamook, Tutuni, Wishram).

[6] See RBAE 30 : 689, note 2 (Caribou-Eaters [Etheneldeli], Dog-Rib, Kato, Kutenai). Similar tales occur among the Tahltan.

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kaca, a word that he could not define. No informant pointed out that the term could be related to the local word for boot, keske. Morice opines that "Kaska is the name of no tribe or sub-tribe, but McDane [sic!] Creek is called by the name Na·ane KaaHa—the H representing a peculiar guttural-sibilant aspiration—and this is the real word which corrupted into Cassiar by the whites, has, since a score of years or more, served to designate the whole mining region."[illegible] Although it is difficult to be definite concerning the associations of the term Kaska, enough data are at hand to criticize with some finality the use of the term Nahani for any group of Indians. Various widely scattered people have at various times been called by this appellation. Thus the present writer heard in the field that long ago the Nahani Indians hunted in the area between McDame Creek Post and Kechika River. These people were said to have been giants who died out because of incestuous practices, sons even copulating with mothers and fathers with daughters (WT).[illegible] Another informant identified the Nahani with the Pelly River people, while another man applied the word to the Tahltan. Writing early in the nineteenth century Keith describes the country around Fort Liard as having been abandoned by the "Na ha né tribe" under pressure from a new population.[illegible] The reports of the Department of Indian Affairs frequently contain references to "nomadic" Nahani Indians said to reside in the corner made by the Fort Nelson and Liard rivers. In 1915 a report stated that these people "are gradually merging into surrounding bands in the north and that in a few years they will have entirely lost their identity and standing as a band."[illegible] In 1943, in Fort Nelson, the writer was assured by the game warden of northern British Columbia that Nahani was another name for certain Kaska Indians inhabiting the area around Nelson Forks and west of Fort Nelson. From all this the conclusion follows that numerous Athapaskan groups themselves designated as Nahani (na- indicates "enemy" or "hostile"[illegible]) other remote and distrusted Indian bands with whom they lacked frequent relations. European and Canadian writers have tried to apply the term to specific population units. 101 [773]

Surrounding the Kaska Indians were a number of other Athapaskan speaking groups. In clockwise order, immediately to the southwest and west were the Tahltan Indians (synonymy: Tatcotena, Tutcotena). Various equivalents were received for this group, including People who Fish Salmon in the River and People who Stay in a Low Place. Beal Carlick, a Tahltan informant, derived the name from the village of Tahltan, located at the juncture of the Tahltan and Stikine rivers. The village itself received its appellation from a woman who descended the Tahltan River and at its mouth met a man who had originally come from the south. This man heard a voice calling from the opposite bank of the Stikine and so discovered the woman. They exchanged names. He asked her if she belonged to the Crow or Wolf moiety and she replied that she was Crow. The man

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[illegible] Morice, *Nah-ane and their Language* (1902-03), 519.

[illegible] The Dease River was once called the "Nahany." See Purcell, *Campbell of the Yukon* (1942), 3.

[illegible] Keith, *Letters to Mr. Roderic McKenzie* (1890), 66-68. See also Hodge, *Handbook of American Indians* (1912), II, 11.

[illegible] Canada, *Annual Reports of the Department of Indian Affairs* (1915), 103.

[illegible] Hoijer, *Linguistic History* (1946), 223. See below, p. 92, 97.

Upper Liard

BELIEF AND THOUGHT

COSMOGONY AND THEOGONY

773 772 UPPER LIARD KASKA. Cosmological speculation remained unelaborated in aboriginal Kaska culture. Also, the limited material we collected on this topic makes it impossible to iron out inconsistencies and contradictions. A distinction between the sky and the earth obtained in pre-contact times,[1] and recognition of at least two periods of terrestrial habitation is implicitly revealed in cosmogonical narratives. The earlier period of the world antedates "true Indians." Perhaps it is then that "the animals were like people." At any rate, animals constituted the original earthly population. While they were still powerful (but not necessarily prior to human creation), there came a great flood that killed the monsters who threatened already existing people. Informants ascribed the flood to God who designed it to punish the people because they fought "all the time." Some Indians secured themselves by building a raft which the rising waters lifted until it came to rest on a mountain top. "You can still see the place where the raft came down. Here you can find big elephant [mammoth?] teeth" (X).[2] Following the flood Crow restored the world, the myth describing that event being the familiar Earth Diver tale. Today original creation is attributed to God, Tenatiia, a word probably designating a "rich and powerful person." Nobody regards God and Crow as identical. Informants could not say whether the idea of an anthropomorphic supreme being antedated European penetration of the Cassiar. They implied that Tenatiia had always existed but not as a supreme god. This, of course, does not mean that the ancestors of [777] the present day Kaska recognized Tenatiia as a deity. The evidence strongly suggests that the name was syncretized to designate the God of the Hebraic-Christian tradition.

773 539 Apparently not all the animals can be traced back to a prediluvian golden age. Beaver, for example, had to be created from human stock!

> Originally there were no beaver in this country. A couple had one girl. These three were traveling but did not know how they would cross the creeks. At every creek except the last they found a bridge. The last creek they couldn't cross. They camped for the night and when they started the next day found that the girl was missing. But there was a beaver dam across the creek. Just as the father came up to it he saw a beaver swimming away and recognized his daughter. This was the first beaver (X).

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[1] In Tlingit belief "... the earth was conceived of as flat and the sky as a solid vault. Inside of and between these everything was alive with spirits ... and some also resided upon the sky itself." Swanton, *Social Condition, Beliefs and Linguistic Relationship of the Tlingit Indians* (1908), 451.

[2] Field reports that the Pelly River Indians "have lots of old legends of the country being flooded, also of being covered with ice, another of the country being covered with ashes, and the trouble the people had at that time to live." (Field, *Unpublished manuscript* [1913], 16.) The flood tradition also is found among the Tlingit where a mountain top on Prince of Wales Island is pointed out as the resting place of the Indians who survived. (Jones, *Study of the Thlingets of Alaska* [1914], 188.) Swanton, also apparently perplexed by conflicting traditions, says, "Raven was the creator, or rather the organizer, of the present state of things." Swanton, *Social Condition, Beliefs and Linguistic Relationship of the Tlingit Indians* (1908), 421.

Upper Liard

Like most people the Kaska Indians postulated the existence of certain normally unseen and unsensed entities, including counterparts or souls of the empirically sensed animals.[3] Other sensed events, like stones or clouds, also possessed a transcendental character such that they perhaps warrant designation of Kaska thinking as animistic. The normally unseen world included Gusli'na ("devil"), who dwelt at the last point of a long river.[4] He lived in the company of a woman, ɔ'γa, who became the first sheep after she had been killed by the culture hero, Tsu'guya. The attribution of horns to the devil may well represent the influence of biblical mythology. Informants denied the notion of a cold being operating as the devil's helper. Apparently the words guslii, "cold," and Gusliina are not related. The Indians were cognizant of the North Wind Man (itsiipaˀotena) who brought suffering. "If I am mean he will make a big wind to make me suffer. He doesn't want an evil man to follow his track, so he covers it with snow."[5] Cannibalistic giants, like Teγutsiia and Etceγus'tala, inspired considerable fear. Tsitaγitsatse, another giant, befriended men. Weaker than Etceγustela he nevertheless killed the latter with the aid of Indians. When Tsitaγitsatse defecated, his feces became hard as rock the moment that they struck the earth. Helpful to man and powerful in his behalf were the dwarfs, who, however, were constantly menaced by animals. In warfare these small beings helped to bring up wind and cold that paralyzed the enemy. In size a dwarf reached about the height of a caribou jaw. One such being could pack only about half a pound. Despite the tendency of the dwarfs to steal women, people laughed when they spoke of the antics of the little people.[6] Nobody ever secured shamanistic power from a dwarf. Informants could not recall a practice of making offerings to rocks. 774 776

Long ago monstrous animals roamed the world. Although similar beliefs are widespread in North America, in the Cassiar traditions of such animals cannot be discussed without reference to the fossil evidence of mammoths and dinosaurs encountered in the region. The following tale illustrates the kinds of narratives that perpetuated beliefs in monsters. 773

Once when a group of people were camping a big monster, like an elephant, came close to the camp. A shaman who had six fingers (lesloona, "many fingers") went out to meet the animal and addressed it like a person. The monster exclaimed, "I saw young game track. I was going to have a good meal, 773 539

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[3] "It is believed that all animals understand human speech. For this reason natives are careful what they say about them. . . ." Jones, *Study of the Thlingets of Alaska* (1914), 164.

[4] Along the Mackenzie the Indians recognised a cognate "devil, 'Ha is linee,' or, 'the sorcerer.'" McLean, *Notes of a Twenty-Five Years' Service in the Hudson's Bay Territory* (1932), 342.

[5] Among the Swampy Cree the oldest of four brothers was the North Wind who sent cold and punished evil doers. Skinner, *Notes on the Eastern Cree and Northern Saulteaux* (1911), 59; Speck, *Naskapi* (1935), 56–57.

[6] Among the Pelly Indians "there are the little men of the Mountain that are supposed to be about four feet high at the most and have fine living places in the heart of the mountains and are exceptionally strong and wise who come out occasionally and capture their women for wives in some cases making the father of the girl they have taken a medicineman in return for the girl." (Field, *Unpublished manuscript* [1913], 5.) The Attawapiskat Cree were also not afraid of the dwarf people who inhabited the rocky cliffs along rivers. Honigmann, *Attawapiskat Cree field notes* (1947–48).

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773 539 having come a long way." The shaman turned back and flew over the camp. He told the people, "The animal is coming close to the camp. I can't stop it. You boys better move." All the people fled, traveling about 20 miles over the mountains. When they grew tired they made camp. The shaman caught up with them and said, "I've fixed him. When daylight comes you'll hear the animal. He'll go back where he came from."

With daylight they heard a howling and saw two bars of light in the mountains. All the people became afraid. The shaman went out to meet the animal, who said, "You're going to make a trip with me." The shaman advised the people that he would stay with the animal ten days. Then he disappeared. In ten days he returned reeking so strongly that the people could smell him a mile off. He explained that when he had reached the monster the latter had swallowed him. "I went all through the guts and came out the other end. That's why I smell so strong." He then directed the people to smoke him in a fire of rotten wood. The shaman circled the fire singing.

773 Several culture heros were assumed to have existed at an earlier time. Kliʔatata ("killing snowshoe father") invented the bow, the snowshoe, and taught the people to make fish nets from willow-bark line. The informant ranked him "pretty near as good as Tsuguya," suggesting in addition that Kliʔatata might have been the latter's son. Tsuguya's adventures with the devil made good narrative material.

773 539 776 Tsuguya was a smart man who could make anything. One day he went down [up?] a long river. He heard a dog barking and saw a camp at the bottom of a hill. Here there was a woman who looked like a dog. Everybody who came by and saw this dog thought that its owner must be living there and so decided to visit. The dog was ɔya, a devil's girl. When Tsuguya got out of the canoe he fell and the woman took an ax and struck him. She skinned him and put him in the pot. After boiling the contents a long time she uncovered the vessel but found Tsuguya still alive. Then she fried [broiled?] him. Finally she realized that this man could not be killed.

Tsuguya went hunting. He met a bear who also had a girl. This woman, too, was a helper of the devil. The girl said that there was a bear across the lake. She hoped to trap the man. Tsuguya went over and killed the bear. The devil now chased Tsuguya, who went into a hole and turned into a beaver. The devil told his girl to set a net. They set the net but when they hauled it in found that it had caught nothing. The beaver just kept swimming around. The devil now drank all the water in that place. The smart man went into the mud and caused the water to reappear again (X).

773 776 Many other adventures and narrow escapes befell Tsuguya. In one of these he outwitted the anthropomorphic moon plus the latter's animal helpers in order to win the moon's daughter for a wife. The moon is also identified with the devil (O). Tsuguya appears to be the Athapaskan counterpart of the Algonkian Gluskabe and Tcikapis. The remaining Kaska culture hero, Gatco ("big rabbit"), bore no relationship to Tsuguya. Although nothing was learned of his activities it is not improbable that he is cognatic to Nanabozho, identified by Ojibwa and Menomini as the Great Hare.[7]

773 *Dease River Kaska.* Contemporary informants speak readily of the Supreme Being who "made everything." Another version of creation has been recorded in this area by Teit.[8]

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[7] Fisher, *The Mythology of the Northern and Northeastern Algonkians in Reference to Algonkian Mythology as a Whole* (1946), 230.

[8] Teit, *Kaska Tales* (1917), 441–442. Speaking of Tahltan cosmogony the same writer says: "Some of the Tahltan beliefs are very interesting. The earth is thought to be circular, and to be surrounded by salt water lakes. The sky is dome-shaped, and hangs over the earth like an umbrella, the edges touching the waters all around. The sky revolves sunwise, while the earth is considered stationary. At

6: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945)1954 ND12 Nahane ND12

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Origin of the Earth

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Once there was no earth. Water was where the earth is now. The world was a great lake. The animals and birds wanted to have an earth, and proposed to dive for it. The earth was very deep under the water. Beaver and Muskrat, and all the animals and birds, dived, but none of them reached the bottom. None of them stayed under water longer than half a day. At last Diver (a bird) went down. After six days he came up quite exhausted and speechless. His friends examined his toenails, and found mud or earth under them. From this they formed on top of the water a new earth, which grew until it formed the present earth. At first it was merely mud and very soft. Later it became firm, and trees and vegetation began to grow on it. Now the earth is old and dry. Perhaps it is drying up.

Perhaps there came a second flood. At any rate Teit collected a tradition of a great inundation.[9]

The Great Flood

Once there came a great flood which covered the earth. Most of the people made rafts, and some escaped in canoes. Great darkness came on, and high winds which drove the vessels hither and thither. The people became separated. Some were driven far away. When the flood subsided, people landed wherever they found the nearest land. When the earth became dry, they lived in the places near where they had landed. People were now widely scattered over the world. They did not know where other people lived, and probably thought themselves the only survivors. Long afterwards, when in their wanderings they met people from another place, they spoke different languages, and could not understand one another. *This is why there are now many different centres of population, many tribes, and many languages.* Before the flood, there was but one centre; for all the people lived together in one country, and spoke one language.

Looking beyond the everyday world of the senses the Indians postulated a variety of entities or beings. The cannibalistic Big Man (Tenatco), who used no dwelling but sometimes dug a hole in the ground, inspired fear because of his predilection for stealing adults and children. Bald Man constituted a beneficent giant, who subsisted on fish and always walked stooped until one day by straightening up he raised the sky. Bald Man continues to live on earth but is never seen. The Little Men, Klunetene, who lived on 776

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the edges of the earth the weather is always chilly. Some think that above or beyond the sky there is another earth, which is inhabited by birds. Possibly the sky is the floor of this other world. There is also a belief that the sky is animated and the same as the mother of the people, while the sun is masculine and the same as the father. The sun was formerly prayed to, and traces of sun worship abound. The earth we tread is like a crust, or skin, or blanket, which is held up by the earth-mother, who is like a post that supports it. When she gets tired, she moves her position, which causes an earthquake. She is becoming older and weaker all the time, therefore the earth is not so high as formerly, and is sagging down into the waters. Some day she will be unable to hold it up any longer. She will fall like a rotten post, and the earth will drop down and be submerged. There is also a belief in the meat-mother, who gave birth to all the animals and still controls them. The moon and stars are transformed beings. Wind is the breath of people, viz., a cold people who live in the far north, and a warm people who live in the south. When they speak, cold and warm winds blow over the earth. Thunder is a bird, and the noise of thunder is caused by the flapping of its wings. Its armpits are red, and when these are exposed by the extending of its wings, the red is seen as lightning." (Teit, *On Tahltan (Athabaskan) Work* [1912], 485–486.) Our upper Liard River informant (O) reported that Tahltan believed in the Nadanke (also, Nadanii), who wore large patched moccasins and sometimes caused people to faint upon his sudden appearance. To pacify him people left large moccasins in the bush but they were never taken.

[9] Teit, *Kaska Tales* (1917), 442–443.